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ichneumon (mangouste). The natives also hunt the hare, porcupine, ground-squirrel, rat, and hedgehog. The rivers and khors, and chiefly their sidearms, are populated by crocodiles, hippos, and numerous fish, some of which weigh up to lbs. 200. The birds are mainly riverain: cranes, storks, herons, egrets, fish-eagles, marabous, pelicans, ibises, ducks, geese; the guinea-fowl is very common; numberless swarms of dura-birds (Pyromelana franciscana) are a great nuisance to the farmer; besides them quails, pigeons, turtle-doves, hawks, crows, swallows, owls, and starlings are frequent. Of snakes the largest ist python; of poisonous species the puff-adder and some others occur; harmless snakes are numerous.

161 162 [621] POPULATION

The population amounts to about 60000 souls,[1] who live in a little more than 1200 villages, and 10000 "domiciles", each of which consists of three to five huts. Accordingly the average number of people living in a village is 50, and one domicile is inhabited by about six persons. The largest village is Atwadoi in a district of the same name north of Kodok; it consists (1903) of 120 domiciles. The villages generally lie in the belt between the swamp of the Nile-bank and the forest. There are, however, eight groups of villages 12—22 miles inland, away from the river. The country is, for its size, and considering the fact that only in the higher parts settlements are possible, thickly populated. "Right away from Kaka to Lake No is a continous string of villages lying about a mile from the river. There are only two points in the whole of this distance, at which the interval between villages exceeds two miles, and these are the points where grazing is bad, between Akurwar and Nun, and between Nialwag and Nyagwado." A. E. S., p. 193.

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According to Schweinfurth, the population was much larger formerly. In 1871, when the Egyptians had conquered the country, a census was taken; the villages on the left bank of the Nile were almost exactly 3000. The inhabitants of this part numbered one million, each village consisting of 45—200 huts, a hut comprising four persons. No part of Africa, not even of the world, is so densely populated. "The whole western Nile bank, as far as the boundaries of the country reach, is like one single village, whose parts are separated by a distance of only 500 to 1000 steps. The hut-clusters are built in an astonishing regularity, and are so crowded together that from a distance they look like a cluster of mushrooms."

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The statement of a population of more than one million is probably too high; the Shilluks have doubtlessly suffered cruelly from wars and raids, but in spite of this a decrease from one million to 60000 within a time of forty years is hardly thinkable.

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Since the time the people live under the peace of Anglo-Egyptian rule, they

[1] This is the number of the White Nile and Sobat Shilluks only; if all the Shilluk speaking people are included, the population will amount to several hundreds of thousands.

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are increasing in numbers. The average number of children reared in one family may be from three to four. The number of children born by one woman is not low; women with ten children are no exception. But as a rule no more than three or four children grow up to maturity in one family, the rest dying from want of reasonable nursing. If in course of time the natives are taught to take better care of their children, the population will no doubt strongly increase. A cause of the low birth rate in many families is the fact that a man is not supposed to have intercourse with his wife while a baby is nursing, that is, till the baby is from two to two and a half years old. They consider it a great shame for a woman to become pregnant before this time has elapsed. If such a case happens, they generally will say that the woman has committed adultery.

OUTWARD APPEARANCE OF THE PEOPLE

The Shilluks are tall in figure, the average height of the men being nearly 1.80 m.[1] They are generally lean, rather narrow in the shoulders, and have but thin calves; their arms and legs are long, especially the legs below the knees and the forearms; hands and feet are small. A characteristic posture of the Shilluk man is to stand on one leg, and bending the other, press the sole of his foot against the inner surface of the knee, while one hand holds a spear stuck into the ground; he will stand thus for hours, looking admiringly at his cattle. They are very clever in running and jumping, and are capable of sustaining considerable fatigue.

Their skin is dark, almost black; albinoes seem to be rare. The physical appearance of the Shilluks is not that of pure negroes, they might rather be called negroids, in spite of their dark colour. Most of them have a fierce, sometimes a proud, haughty look. The cheek-bones and lips are protruding, but not excessively; the nose is flat, but high noses are not infrequent. Young people of both sexes are finely built, while in old age they generally become very thin and bony. Their gait is erect and elastic.

PAINTING THE BODY

What makes the Shilluks look most ugly and almost frightful in the eyes of a newcomer, is their habit of smearing the whole body. While the lower part is covered with ashes, the breast and head are painted with red earth or with chalk, or, if they can afford it, with oil or butter. Sometimes the whole body is painted white or red, and lines or figures are drawn across the face.

EXTRACTION OF INCISORS.

Like most Nilotic negroes the Shilluk remove the lower incisors; this is done in early childhood; its omission would, in the belief of the natives, cause sickness; for instance, a case occurred where the teeth were taken out to cure sore eyes; a woman who had just had them removed from her child, said that unless they were taken out, her child would undoubtedly be deformed in some way, when it grew to maturity. Another explanation for extracting the teeth

[1] five feet ten inches.